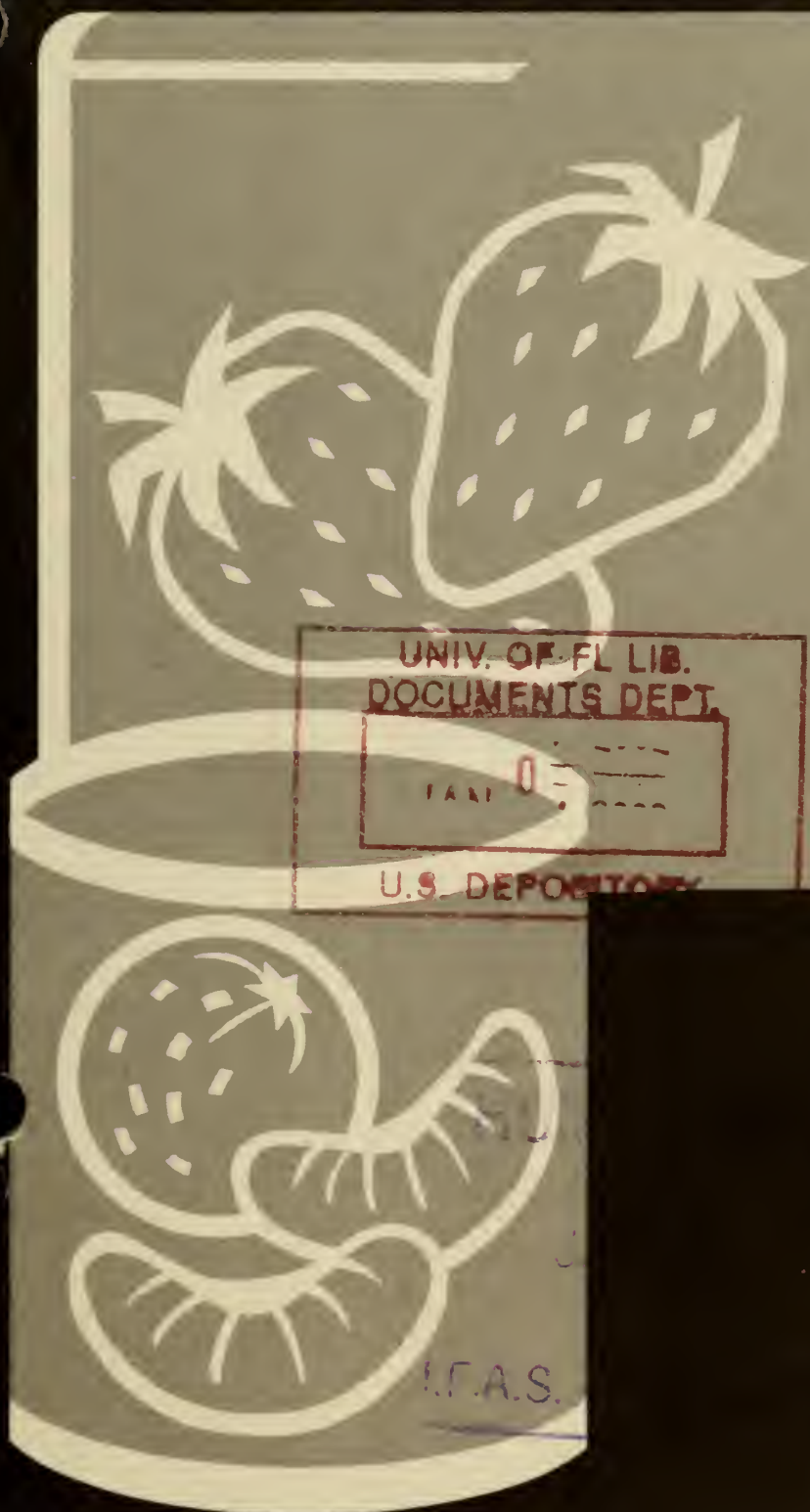


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How to Buy CANNED and FROZEN FRUITS



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How to Buy CANNED and FROZEN FRUITS



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Fruit and Vegetable Division,
Consumer and Marketing Service.*

Introduction

Canned and frozen fruits, preserved at the peak of goodness, are ready to serve as they come from the container and are delicious ingredients in salads, sauces, desserts, and other dishes. They are convenient to use and are always available.

Processed fruits differ in quality—taste, texture, and appearance—and are usually priced according to their quality.

Because different qualities of fruits are suited for different uses, you can make better buys by choosing processed fruits in the quality that fits your needs.

Grades

U.S. grade standards—measures of quality—have been established for most processed fruits by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

**U.S. Grade A
or
Fancy** Grade A fruits are the very best, with an excellent color and uniform size, weight, and shape. Having the proper ripeness and few or no blemishes, fruits of this grade are excellent to use for special purposes where appearance and flavor are important.

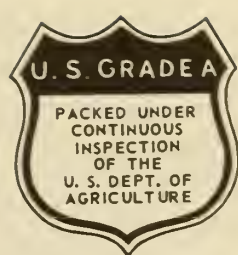
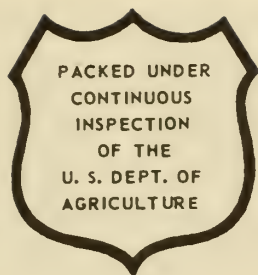
**U.S. Grade B
or
Choice** Grade B fruits make up much of the fruits that are processed and are of very good quality. Only slightly less perfect than Grade A in color, uniformity, and texture, Grade B fruits have good flavor and are suitable for most uses.

**U.S. Grade C
or
Standard** Grade C fruits may contain some broken and uneven pieces. While flavor may not be as sweet as in higher qualities, these fruits are still good and wholesome. They are useful where color and texture are not of great importance, such as in puddings, jams, and frozen desserts.

Many processors, wholesalers, buyers for food retailers, and others use the U.S. grade standards to establish the value of a product.

USDA also provides an inspection service which certifies the quality of processed fruits on the basis of these standards. A voluntary service, it is available for a fee. Under the continuous inspection program, processed fruits are inspected by highly trained specialists during all phases of preparation, processing, and packaging.

When a product has been officially graded under continuous USDA inspection, it may carry the official grade name and the statement "Packed under continuous inspection of the U.S. Department of Agriculture." The grade name and the statement may also appear within shields.



The grade name, such as "Fancy" or "Grade A," is sometimes shown without "U.S." in front of it. If the grade name alone appears on a container, the contents should meet the quality for the grade shown, even though the product has not been officially inspected for grade.

Progressive processors strive to maintain the quality of their products, so the brand name of a processed fruit may also indicate the quality. Sometimes stores will offer different qualities under different brands. Most processors pack fruits in at least two grades.

Labels

Federal regulations require that the following information be included on the front panel of the label of a can or package.

The common or usual name of the fruit.

The form (or style) of fruit, such as whole, slices, or halves. If the form is visible through the package, it need not be stated.

For some fruits, the variety or color.

Sirups, sugar, or liquid in which a fruit is packed must be listed near the name of the product.

The total contents (net weight) must be stated in ounces for containers holding 1 pound or less. From 1 pound to 4 pounds, weight must be given in both total ounces and pounds and ounces (or pounds and fractions of a pound).



The net weight of a product includes the sirup or liquid in which it is packed.

Other information required on the label, although not on the front panel, is:

- Ingredients, such as spices, flavoring, coloring, special sweeteners, if used.
- Any special type of treatment.
- The packer's or distributor's name and place of business.

Labels may also give the quality or grade, size, and maturity of the fruit, cooking directions, and recipes or serving ideas. If the label lists the number of servings in a container, the law requires that the size of the serving be given in common measures, such as ounces or cups.

You may find the USDA grade shield on cans or packages of fruits that have been packed under continuous USDA inspection.



Commercial Processing

Fruits for canning and freezing are harvested at the proper stage of ripeness so that a good texture and flavor may be preserved. Much of the processing is done by automated equipment and the fruits are handled little by plant workers. Present-day practices help assure us of wholesome, sanitary products with good flavor and quality.

The initial work in preparing canned and frozen fruits is similar. At the processing plant, the fresh fruits are usually sorted into sizes by machine and washed in continuously circulating water or under sprays of water. Some fruits, such as apples, pears, and pineapple, are mechanically peeled and cored. Next, they are moved on conveyor belts to plant workers who do any other peeling or cutting necessary. Pits and seeds are removed by automatic equipment, and the fruits are also prepared in the various styles—halves, slices, or pieces—by machine. Before the fruits are canned or frozen, plant workers remove any undesirable pieces.

Canned Fruits

Cans or glass jars are filled with fruit by semi-automatic machines. The containers are next moved to machines that fill them with the correct amount of sirup or liquid and then to equipment that automatically seals them. The sealed cans or jars are cooked under carefully controlled conditions of time and temperature to assure that the products will keep without refrigeration. After the cans or jars are cooled, they are stored in cool, dry, well-ventilated warehouses until they are shipped to market.

Frozen Fruits

Frozen fruits are most often packed with dry sugar. After the initial preparation, packages are filled with fruit by automatic equipment, sugar or sirup is added, and the containers are automatically sealed. The packaged fruit is then quickly frozen in special low-temperature chambers and stored at temperatures of 0° F. or lower.

Sizes and Servings

The size of a serving of processed fruits varies because of the different styles of fruits and the different ways of using them.

For fruit mixtures or small fruits that you might serve by measurement, one-half cup is the serving size commonly used for adults. Two halves are the usual amount of individual servings of fruit pieces.

The most popular can sizes and the average number of servings in them are:

Net Weight	Servings
8–8½ ounces — — — —	2
16–17 ounces — — — —	3–4
29 ounces — — — — —	7

The net weight shown on a label includes both fruit and sirup. For the best buy, figure out the cost per ounce. Large containers often cost less per ounce, but not always.

To figure the number of servings in packages of frozen fruits, consider the weight on the package as totally usable.

Storage

Proper storage is important in maintaining the quality of processed fruits.

If you keep **canned fruits** in a place no warmer than 75° F., they will usually retain their quality for a year or more. The color, flavor, and texture of canned fruits that have been stored at very warm temperatures or for long periods of time may not stay at top quality but the fruits still will be safe to eat. Once a can has been opened, the fruit should be refrigerated if it is not for immediate use.

Frozen fruits stored in an ice-cube compartment of a refrigerator usually will keep well for only a few days. If kept in a separate refrigerator-freezer compartment, most frozen fruits will keep satisfactorily for several weeks. To maintain the quality of frozen fruits for a longer time, store them in a freezer that can maintain a temperature of 0° F. or lower. If you wish to use only a portion

of a package, be sure to replace the remaining portion in the freezer before it has thawed.

Tips on Containers

When buying **canned fruit**, avoid cans that show signs of bulging or swelling at the ends or of leakage. Small dents in a can will not harm the contents unless the dents have pierced the metal or loosened the can seam.

Fruits sold in glass jars with twist-off lids are tightly sealed to preserve the contents. If you find any indication that the lid has been tampered with, return the jar to the store and report it to the store manager.

Frozen fruits should be frozen solid. If fruits in a package are not firm, they may have lost quality. Avoid buying frozen fruit with stains on the package since this may indicate that the fruit was defrosted at some time during marketing. To insure the quality of frozen fruits, pick them up as the last item on your grocery shopping and take them home in an insulated bag.

A Consumer's Guide to Canned and Frozen Fruits

The grade, style, and sirup or special flavorings in which processed fruits are prepared all affect the cost of the fruits and how you may want to use them.

Most processed fruits are available in at least two grades. The grade is not often indicated on processed fruits, but you can learn to tell differences in quality by trying different brands. To help you choose the grade of fruit that will suit your use you have in mind, the grades of some of the most popular fruits are described in the list that follows, along with the styles in which the fruits are available.

You will find the style and the type of sirup or special packing on the label of processed fruits. Whole fruits or halves or slices of similar size are more expensive than mixed pieces of various sizes and shapes. You may choose among canned

Continued on page 14

HOW TO USE



CRANBERRY
SAUCE WITH
ROAST
TURKEY



RHUBARB
ICE CREAM
SAUCE



CHUNKY
APPLE-
SAUCE
SIDE
DISH

GRADE A

GRADE B

GRADE C

PINEAPPLE
UPSIDE-
DOWN
CAKE

MIXED
FRUIT
GELATIN
MOLD

APPLESAUCE
CAKE

MIXED
PIECES
AND
SAUCES

DISH
OF
ROYAL
ANNE
CHERRIES

GRAPES
"JUBILEE"

CHERRY
TURNOVER

WHOLE
FRUIT AND
BERRIES

GRADE C

BERRY
PANCAKES

GRADE B

BLUEBERRY
MUFFINS

GRADE A

"BREAKFAST"
PRUNES

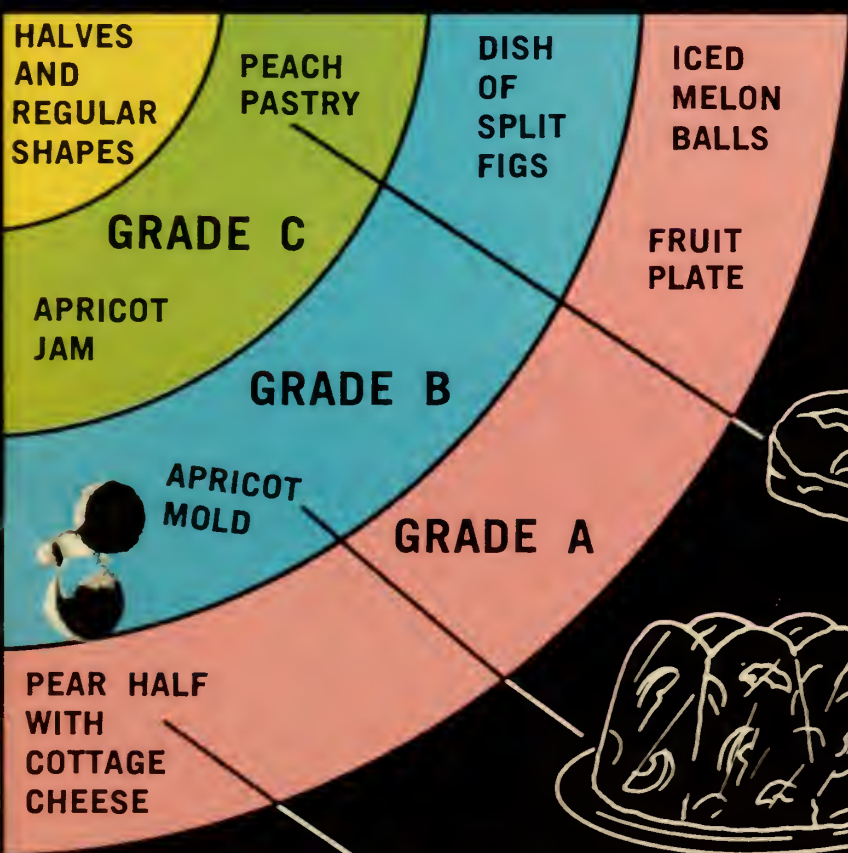
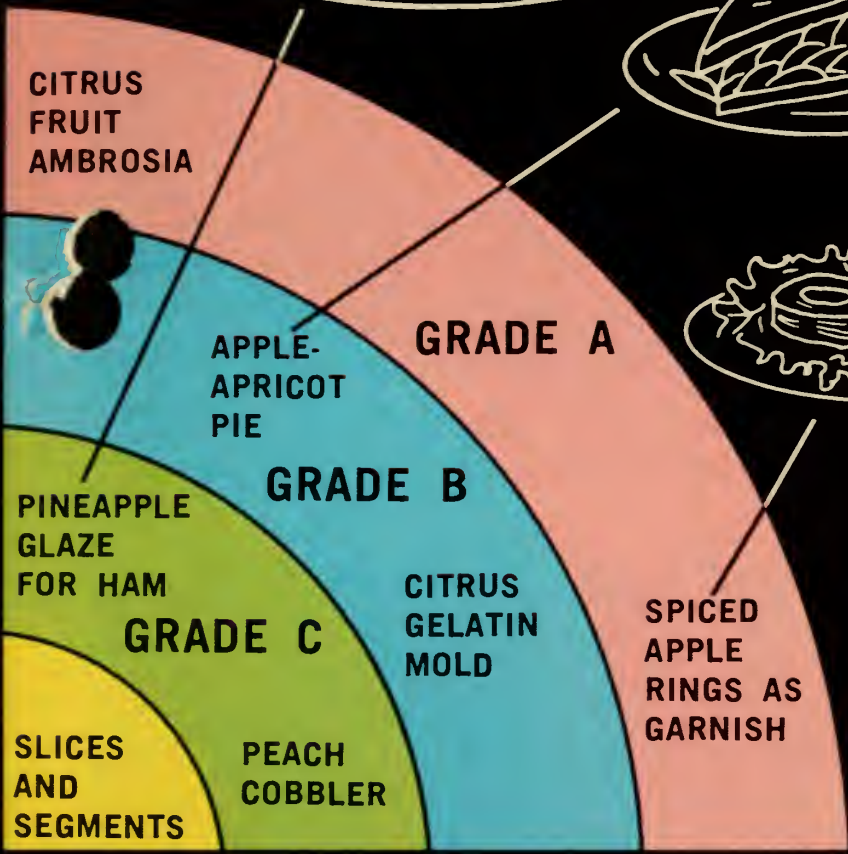
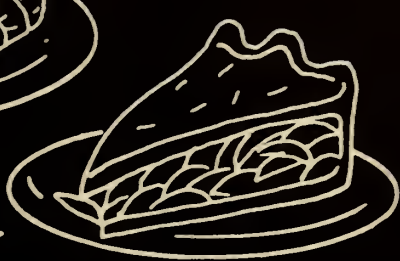
BOYSEN BERRY
PIE

STRAWBERRY
SHORTCAKE



Examples show how
styles (center ring)
may be used in
various grades.

GRADES AND STYLES



CANNED PEACHES

Typical Samples

**U.S.
GRADE
A**



Halves: Good yellow-orange color and texture typical of proper ripeness.

**U.S.
GRADE
B**



Halves: Some variation in color. Slight defects, such as a partial piece.

**U.S.
GRADE
C**



Mixed Pieces: Good average quality. Variation in color and ripeness. Some blemished pieces.

FROZEN STRAWBERRIES

Typical Samples

U.S.
GRADE
A



Whole: Color very good—red to pinkish red. Uniform color and size.

U.S.
GRADE
B



Whole: Some variation in color and size.

U.S.
GRADE
A



Sliced: Slight variation in color and some mushiness, characteristic of sliced style.

Continued from page 9

fruits packed in juice, special sweeteners, water, slightly sweetened water, and heavy or extra heavy sirup. The heavier the sirup, the sweeter and more flavorful the fruit, and sometimes the higher the price.

Remember:

Grade A (or Fancy) fruits are the most flavorful and attractive and therefore usually the most expensive. They are excellent to use for special luncheons or dinners, served as dessert, used for fruit plates, or broiled or baked to serve with meat entrees.

Grade B (or Choice) fruits, which are not quite as attractive or tasty as Grade A, are very good quality. They have many uses: as breakfast fruits, in gelatin molds, fruit cups or compotes, topping for ice cream, or as side dishes.

Grade C (or Standard) fruits vary more in taste and appearance than the higher grades and they cost less. They are useful in many dishes, especially where appearance is not important; for example, in sauces for meats, in cobblers, tarts, upside-down cake, frozen desserts, jam, or puddings.

Apples

Canned apples are available as slices and chunky pieces, packed in water, in a thickened, sweet and spicy sirup, or prepared with starch, sugar, and spices as pie filling mix. More expensive specialty packs are whole apples, cored like baked apples, with or without the peel, and artificially colored and spiced apple rings.

Applesauce

Applesauce, the most popular form of canned apples, is available in a chunky texture as well as the pureed form. It may also be spiced or combined with raspberries, strawberries, pineapple, apricots, or other fruits. Top quality applesauce is a bright color, and there is little separation of liquid from the sauce when it is removed from the container. Second quality applesauce

may be slightly thin or slightly stiff; separation of liquid from the sauce is more noticeable; and the color may be somewhat dull.

Apricots

Canned apricots are delectable just as they come from the can or jar. They also add a piquant flavor to sauces, salads, or baked goods. They are usually packed in heavy or extra heavy sirup. The styles most often found are unpeeled halves, unpeeled whole apricots, and peeled whole apricots, with or without the pits. Even in the higher grades, you may expect to find very small blemishes or "freckles" on unpeeled apricots. Peeled whole apricots, prepared from ripe, fleshy fruits, may sometimes be soft, and the pits may be loose.

Blackberries and similar berries

Several kinds of "cane" or "bush" berries are prepared as whole frozen berries, packed with or without sugar or sirup. Blackberries are the most common, but you may also find boysenberries, dewberries, loganberries, or youngberries.



Blueberries

A favorite for pie making, canned blueberries are sold as a ready-to-use pie filling mix, and they are also packed in water or light sirup.

Frozen blueberries are good as dessert by themselves or served with ice cream. Top quality frozen blueberries, with their bright blue-purple color, look much like the fresh berries.

Cherries

Red tart cherries, sweet cherries, and maraschino cherries are the varieties you will find preserved by canning.

Red tart, or pie, cherries are pitted and packed in water or in a ready-to-use pie filling mix.

Sweet cherries are of two types, light and dark. Most light sweet cherries are the Royal Anne variety; usually they are not pitted, but some pitted light cherries are available. Light sweet cherries are often used as a side dish or sauces. Dark sweet cherries usually are pitted; they are the variety used to make Cherries Jubilee.

Grade A sweet cherries are tender and thick-fleshed, about the same size, with few cracks or other blemishes. Light varieties are pinkish-yellow to pale amber with a very light pinkish tan or tanish brown blush. Dark varieties are deep red to purple red or purple black. Their colors are bright and uniform.

Grade B sweet cherries are thick fleshed but may be slightly soft and vary somewhat in size. The color of both light and dark varieties may be slightly dull.

Grade C sweet cherries are thin-fleshed and vary from firm to soft in texture. Some may be flabby. The size and color of both light and dark varieties are not as uniform as those in the higher grades.

Maraschino cherries are usually prepared from sweet cherries. They are artificially colored, and a specially flavored sirup gives them their distinctive taste. Often called cocktail cherries, they are very uniform in size, with pits removed, and are available with or without stems.

Cranberry Sauce

Canned cranberry sauce, a favorite to serve with chicken and turkey, is in jellied and whole-berry styles. Top quality cranberry sauce is a bright color, and the gel is tender. Whole-berry style contains whole berries and parts of berries.

Figs

This naturally sweet fruit, known from ancient times, is a delicious breakfast dish. Kadota figs, the most common pack, are light greenish-yellow to light amber. They are packed in sirup, most of which comes from the fruit itself. The better grades are always whole and practically uniform in size. Figs that are split or broken, usually because of over-ripeness, are of lower quality.

Other types, found less frequently, are the small Celeste and Mission varieties and "preserved" figs, which are packed in a very thick sirup.

Grapefruit and citrus mixtures

Grapefruit sections may be canned, frozen, or chilled. Mixed grapefruit and orange sections are available canned, and the two fruits are also sold as a chilled product in combination with pineapple pieces and whole maraschino cherries. When this combination is garnished with coconut, it is sometimes called "ambrosia fruits." In top quality packs, the citrus segments are firm and fleshy and at least three-fourths are whole. Canned grapefruit and orange sections are used as breakfast fruits or for salads.

Grapes

Canned grapes, usually of the Thompson seedless variety, are the same kind used in fruit cocktail. They can be used in desserts or gelatin salads. Dressed up with artificial colors and flavors, and sometimes spiced, they are often called "Grapes Jubilee."

Melon balls

Melon is one of the few fruits that normally is processed only by freezing. The most popular style is a mixture of honey dew melon and cantaloup balls.

Mixed fruits

Fruit Cocktail

Fruit cocktail, one of the best known canned fruit mixtures, contains five fruits: diced yellow peaches, diced pears, pineapple dices or tidbits, green-white seedless grapes, and red maraschino cherry halves. The mixture is one of a few standardized by Federal law to give a definite proportion of each of the fruits. Peaches and pears make up the greater part of the mixture.

Fruits for Salad

Carefully selected and almost always of Grade A quality, this canned mixture is a deluxe combination of fruits intended principally for making individual salads. Each can or jar contains approximately equal amounts of quarters or large slices of peaches and pears, apricot halves, large wedges of pineapple, and whole red maraschino cherries.

You can expect these numbers of servings (one piece of each kind of fruit in a serving) in these can sizes:

8 oz. — — — — 2 servings

16 or 17 oz. — 3 servings of large pieces or 4 servings of small pieces

29 or 30 oz. — 5 or 6 servings of large pieces or 7 servings of small pieces

Also called salad fruit, this combination is usually packed in heavy or extra heavy sirup.

Tropical Fruit Salad

Various tropical and other fruits are used to make up this interesting canned fruit mixture. Check the label to see which fruits are included. The most common mixture consists of pieces of banana, pineapple, papaya, mango, passionfruit, and melon, packed in sweetened juices from passionfruit or other tropical fruits. Some mixtures contain mandarin orange sections, grapes, and maraschino cherries. The varying flavors and

textures in tropical fruit salad make it an interesting and different combination to use in salads or fruit cups.

Other Mixed Fruits

Frozen mixed fruits are packaged in a wide range of fruit combinations. The usual pack consists of sliced peaches, dark sweet and red tart pitted cherries, blackberries, raspberries, and grapes. Because they are flavorful while still partially thawed, frozen mixed fruits are a quickly-prepared and elegant dessert. If a 10-ounce package is not large enough for a family, you can add sliced bananas, diced apples, mandarin oranges, or melon balls.

Less familiar than other fruit mixtures are canned mixtures of small dices and chips of peaches and pears, often with green-white seedless grapes added. These mixed fruits are a thrifty buy. They can be used in gelatin molds or as fruit cocktail.

Oranges

Most canned oranges sold in the United States are imported. Called mandarin oranges, they are packed as segments that are similar in shape and color to tangerine segments. Because they are naturally sweet, they are usually packed in water or light sirups. They are also available combined with pineapple segments or tidbits. Mandarin oranges have a variety of uses; they are excellent in gelatin molds and other salads and in fruit cups.

Peaches

Two types of canned peaches are available: clingstone and freestone. Clingstone peaches have a firm and smooth texture and clean-cut edges. Freestone peaches have a softer texture and raggedy edges. Both kinds are yellow to yellow-orange, except for the seldom-seen white freestone.

Both types come in these styles: whole (usually

spiced), halves, slices, quarters, and mixed pieces of irregular sizes and shapes. Once in a while you may find diced peaches, but dices are usually packed in canned fruit cocktail and other fruit mixes.

Canned peaches are packed in light, heavy, or extra heavy sirups, water, or slightly sweetened water.

Frozen peaches are usually sliced for easy-to-serve dishes. They are also packed in frozen mixed fruits.

Pears

Canned pears may be found as halves, slices, or quarters, and mixed pieces of irregular sizes and shapes. Sometimes the variety, such as Bartlett, will be on the label. Pears as dices and chips are used in fruit cocktail and other mixed fruits.

Top quality, Grade A, pear halves, quarters, and slices have an almost translucent, very light color. They neither vary much in size or shape nor have a lot of trimmings or broken pieces. In this grade, canned pears may have only a few slight blemishes and rarely have any pieces of stem, peel, or core. They also have a tender, even texture, with no graininess or breakdown of flesh.

Grade B canned pears are slightly less perfect than Grade A but are still of very good quality. In Grade B, the texture may have moderate graininess. In thrifty Grade C, you will find more blemishes, greater variation in shapes, and more broken pieces.

Mixed pieces of irregular sizes and shapes are always Grade B or Grade C because they lack uniformity of shape and vary in texture. But p pieces are often very good in other respects.

Whole pears usually come colored and spiced. They usually rate Grade A because they are specially selected as to size, freedom from blemishes, and proper ripeness.

Canned pears are packed in light, heavy, or extra heavy sirups and in water, slightly sweetened water, or juices.

Pears are not available frozen.

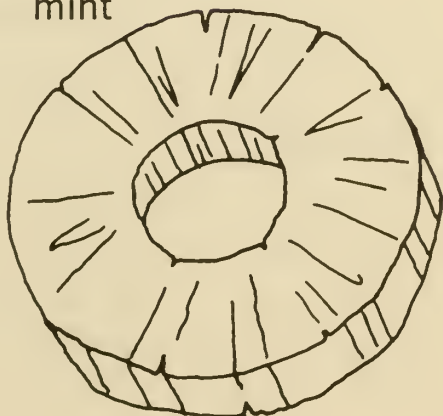
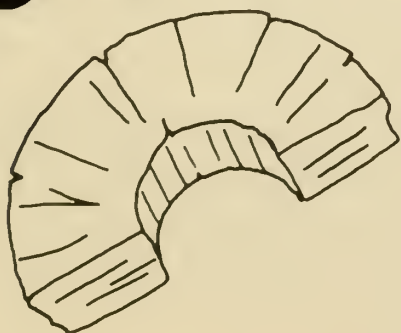
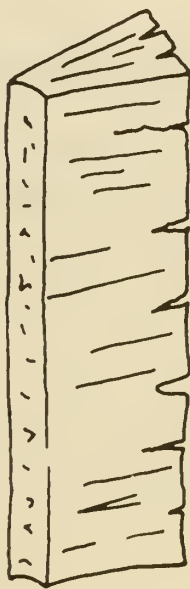
Pineapple

Hawaii supplies us with most of our processed pineapple products. Puerto Rico, Mexico, and other countries also ship to the United States. Because pineapple varieties are not the same in each producing area, slight color and flavor differences are normal.

Canned pineapple is prepared by special cutting machines to give almost perfect-sized slices and other forms. You will find 10 whole, cored slices in a 20-ounce can and 8 slices in a 30-ounce can. (The larger can holds slices which are both larger in diameter and thicker.) There are also special flat cans containing 4 to 5 slices.

Other popular and versatile forms are crushed pineapple, tidbits, and chunks or large cube-like pieces. Special styles include whole, cored cylinders and spears. All of these styles are most often of very high quality. Half slices and broken slices do not rate as high because of appearance.

Frozen pineapple is available in a limited number of forms, mostly tidbits, chunks, and spears. Often these are garnished with mint or mint flavoring.



Plums

Two principal types of plums are canned. Purple plums (or prune-plums) are readily available, while the green-yellow plums (sometimes called Green Gage or Yellow Egg) are not always in stores. Purple plums usually are not peeled; green-yellow plums are. Ordinarily neither type is pitted. As with other fruits, plums are packed in sirups of different sweetness.



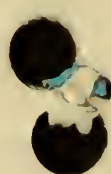
Prunes

Dried prunes in cans or glass jars are ready to serve. Packed in their own juice, they are known as "Prepared Prunes" or "Breakfast Prunes."

Raspberries

Both red and black raspberries are frozen and canned. Because raspberries are so delicate, you can expect some slightly crushed berries even in high quality packs.

Frozen red raspberries are usually packed in a sugar sirup. Handle them carefully and follow package directions closely to keep these berries plump and fresh looking.



Rhubarb

Grown for its edible stalk, rhubarb is not really a fruit but is used as one. Rarely canned, but frozen with a high proportion of sugar, rhubarb must be cooked before use. Before cooking, its color will be pinkish to green.

Strawberries

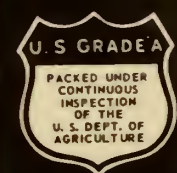
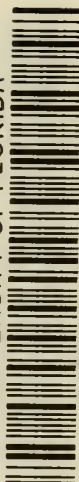
A year-round favorite, frozen strawberries can be purchased whole, sugared or unsugared. They are also available as slices or halves with sugar added. When thawed, the sugar melts with the natural juices of the strawberries to form a sirup.

Frozen strawberries come in a wide range of packaging: whole berries loose in large see-through bags and all styles in cups, cartons, or special fiber-metal cans. Quick-thaw pouches (which can be placed in warm water) make it possible to use the berries almost immediately. In packages of Grade A frozen strawberries, a high proportion are well-colored red berries or slices. Whole berries are reasonably firm, not seedy, and have only a few blemishes, stems, or pieces of caps. Grade A sliced berries are equally as good although there will be a few mushy portions. Slicing and subsequent freezing often cause mushiness of the riper berries.

Grade B frozen strawberries are less colorful with more pinkish berries or slices.

Only limited amounts of strawberries are canned, but canned strawberry pie fillings are seen more and more often in stores. Because strawberries become pale during canning, these products are often artificially colored. If so, the label will name the artificial coloring as well as other ingredients.





To Help You Choose CANNED and FROZEN FRUITS

- Most canned and frozen fruits are packed and priced according to quality (grade) even if the grade isn't shown.

SEP 1 7 1974 SEP 1 0 1974

KNOW THE GRADE

Grade A or Fancy—Top quality—delicious, full-flavored fruits with excellent color and uniform shape and size.

Grade B or Choice—Fruits with very good flavor and color; not quite as attractive as Grade A.

Grade C or Standard—Fruits that are not as sweet or uniform in appearance as Grades A and B; pieces may be broken or uneven.

KNOW THE STYLES

Whole fruits or halves or slices of similar size cost more than mixed pieces of various sizes and shapes.

LOOK FOR THE U.S. GRADE NAME

The U.S. grade name on a can or package means the fruit has been packed under continuous USDA inspection. The grade name or the continuous inspection statement may be shown within the USDA shield.

CONSUMER AND MARKETING SERVICE
HOME AND GARDEN BULLETIN NO. 191
AUGUST 1971